



## **DARTMOUTH COLLEGE IN THE NATION'S WARS**

William Eaton was just sixteen when he joined George Washington's Continental Army in 1780. Following the Revolution, he worked to earn enough money to enroll in Dartmouth College, from which he graduated in 1790. He accepted a commission in the new United States Army and several years later was appointed the U.S. Consul at Tunis. When the war with the Barbary pirates broke out, Eaton now bearing a commission in the U.S. Navy, led a contingent of U.S. Marines and some mercenaries to Derne in Tripoli and secured that city. He was a hero and the Marine Corps embraced the "shores of Tripoli" to celebrate in tale and hymn.

William Eaton stands as a symbol of Dartmouth's long tradition of military service. Dartmouth men Alden Partridge and Sylvanus Thayer were among the early superintendents of the new United States Military Academy at West Point. Thayer introduced major curricular and conduct changes and is known as "the father of West Point." Partridge later formed several military schools, including Norwich University.

Having played a role in the important creation legend of the



Marine Corps and providing service in shaping the education of Army officers, during the Second World War Dartmouth had the largest V-12 program in the country, training on its Hanover, New Hampshire campus future Navy—and Marine Corps—officers.

Dartmouth graduates served bravely and sacrificed in the nation's wars. Seventy-three died in the Civil War, including ten who served in the Confederacy. 112 died in WW I and 310 in WW II. Twelve Dartmouth men died serving in the Korean War and 21 during the Vietnam War.

Dartmouth graduates served with honor. Eri Woodbury commanded a Vermont Cavalry Company in the Civil War and received the Congressional Medal of Honor following the battle at Cedar Creek in Virginia in 1864. Richard Hall died driving an ambulance for the American Field Service in France on Christmas morning 1915. Milton "Stubbie" Pearson captained both football and basketball teams and was a Phi Beta Kappa graduate in 1942. He was killed when the Dauntless Dive Bomber he piloted was shot down in the Battle of Palau. 91% of his classmates served in WW II. And 33 of them, 5% of the class that matriculated in 1938, died during the war. Duncan Sleight of the Class of 1967 died in Vietnam when, during heavy enemy fire, he shielded with his



body a wounded young Marine in his platoon. He posthumously was awarded the Navy Cross for his bravery.

During the 21st century wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, Dartmouth received national recognition for its pioneering role in welcoming veterans of those wars into its student body. And two Dartmouth graduates, Nathaniel Fick and Phil Klay, who were commissioned as officers in the Marine Corps upon graduation, served in Iraq and Afghanistan and wrote two of the critically-acclaimed books about these wars—Fick's non-fiction *One Bullet Away* and Klay's fiction award winning, *Redeployment*.

Stubbie Pearson was the valedictorian for the Class of 1942. At commencement in that first year of WW II, he told his classmates they needed to help end the war and then work to make the world a better place, "A tomorrow with a ray of sunshine more bright than we have ever seen before...."

Here we honor all of those who sacrificed in that quest.

*James Wright  
Dartmouth College  
April 2021*

*Dartmouth Wall Cap Funded by the generous donation of Barry & Karen Elson Dartmouth  
'63 Phi Delta Alpha*